



OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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Director Bettenhausen Encourages California Fire Departments to Apply for Federal 2008 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

Sacramento – Today the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the application period for (FY) 2008 Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG). Applications will begin being accepted March 3, 2008 and must be received by DHS no later than April 4, 2008. AFG grants will award \$500 million to fire departments throughout the national and will be distributed in phases throughout FY 2008. California's total award will depend upon the number of applications received.

The primary goal of the AFG is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical services organizations. AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders to obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards. The Grant Programs Directorate of the Federal Emergency Management Agency administers the grants in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration.

“The money from these grants will serve to improve the safety of the firefighters and enhance their ability to protect the public from hazards,” said Matthew Bettenhausen, Director of the California Office of Homeland Security. “These types of grants are especially beneficial to small and rural fire departments. I encourage departments throughout California to review the grant information and to submit applications for critical programs which might not be funded through other sources.”

In FY 07 California fire departments received 142 AFG grant awards totaling \$17.8 million. Since the beginning of the AFG awards in 2001 California departments have received over \$147 million dollars to support firefighting needs.

Eligible applicants for the FY 2008 AFG are limited to fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations. Two separate applications by fire agencies may be submitted in the following areas:

- **Operations and Safety Program Area:** The grants for fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations are limited to training, equipment, personal protective equipment, wellness and fitness, and modifications to facilities.
- **Vehicle Acquisition Program Area:** Grants to fire departments under this program area include, but are not limited to apparatus including pumpers, brush trucks, tankers/tenders, rescue vehicles, ambulances, aerials, foam units, and fireboats.

Fire Departments and local governments interested in applying for AFG grants can find more detailed information at the websites listed below or may contact the grants Help Desk at 1-866-274-0960 or email to: firegrants@dhs.gov.

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| AFG: | www.firegrantsupport.com |
| US Fire Administration: | www.usfa.fema.gov |
| DHS Grants Directorate: | www.grants.gov |